

Pontilal House Oct. 7th 1850

man, thanks, dear Sue, for your letter received yesterday, & Charles's which came at the same time, & which also one from the Rev. & Mrs. Peckham & near of Dear Paul & this continued sailing - Pray write to me every particular you can about him - does he ever ask about me or take any interest in our doings? He now & long is at home & see you all for a little while, & especially to look on his dear face once more! - And then comes the sad feeling that when you get your letter telling of pleasant meetings & a great company of men come & saddle horses - I dread yet so long for every week's mail! -

I left my journal saying just now you a soup at the outside of Pontilal House & talk in a set the gentle people who make it their home - Mrs. Bentham is not very English in appearance & her taste & then with her few wigs & hair & whiskers is much white & black. He is very quiet the most obliging & patient & persevering worker & success in the continued, incessant labour! He is very agreeable though when he now talks, though he never wastes words in anything he says. Indeed some is very pleasing & his speech quite contrary ~~to~~ ^{and} I Mrs. Bentham is tall, & when I first saw her put me in mind of Mrs. Felton, especially when she smiles - But she has not the large lip - she is not handsome, but one cannot help liking her face. It is so gentle & refined in expression, & so soft and it shows on her face much - she has a fine figure though rather thin - and she dresses very quietly - But everything she has on has a good air, & sets well, & looks better than I think you may not think it always pretty - Her hair is light & quite grey, but she wears it dressed simply & without a cap at home, and it always looks well - I should think she was about 60. And when one knows her you cannot help loving her - She is so very kind, so perfectly simple & sincere, & yet so well informed & intelligent - It might be with her a long time before you would think "amusement" so necessary would say to her quiet life! - The nearest neighbours are the clergy men & no wife who are a north mile off - and Mrs. & Mrs. Bentham have but a small income & do not keep a carriage & therefore can only visit those within walking distance - Her sister is married to a gentleman owning a large estate - But Kenton is no true friend in a way, & Mrs. Bentham & the daughter, even now a young lady in company, like London & Paris, & finds the country dull for any length of time, & so they are always the greater part of the year - When they are here, Mrs. & Mrs. Bentham go to dine with them two or three days at a time; & so occasionally with some other neighbours, but there is but

little into the company which is found any... or 10 or 12 miles... do not care for the... usually, Mrs. Bentham, or with her husband or London, & then they make visits among their friends in distant Counties. The rest of the time they are here. Mrs. Bentham absorbed in his chemical studies & labors, in which she sometimes assists; she finds herself in her garden in summer, & seems always contented & happy in quiet indoor pursuits & employments - and housekeeping is not only the occupation that it is with as for she has only to assist occasionally as far as I can see, and she has no children - But I have come to the conclusion the English Ladies & young ladies, unless perhaps in the great cities in the gay season, think much less of amusement than we do - A party in 10 or 12 weeks or a little visiting seems quite sufficient, & to have once in a while seen or heard some kind nice quite enough for a life -

Our days are in quiet routine. Mrs. Bentham is always down before 10 in the morning, & her son after. Mrs. Bentham believe it down about 10 at least, & I come down to a general kind of study in her little room, where we can ourselves until breakfast, which is at 9. After breakfast the gentlemen return to their labors in the study, Mrs. B. & I can do our selves in sewing or reading or writing letters - sometimes I go into the study to write labels for Dr. Gray - which is at 9 - there is always meat & smashed potatoes generally some meat left from dinner. I used to see in some nice little room - After dinner we walk - Sometimes the gentlemen decline a company and as a matter of work on - The dressing bell rings at 10, & we are at 10. Mrs. Bentham & I generally see or visit, & the gentlemen look over duplicates or any evening work which suits them - A waiter is brought in at 9 with the tea service & put on a table in the corner, Mrs. Bentham makes tea, & a cup of tea & a biscuit, makes ones tea - He is in bed at 10 1/2 - It is a different sort of matter of course the style of dressing quite different from ours - They dress for the morning & all day as we should dress simply for the afternoon - And then gentlemen & ladies make a walk to the river - The next night after our arrival, Mrs. Bentham came, after we were shown to our rooms to say that as we were only ourselves, I would dress a little as I pleased - I innocently took it quite literally, & being quite tired came down in my travelling dress, though I turned a small round me - I may since I know better that it was a horrible breach of etiquette, now when we are in London, I am in my own house, with juster immaculate dress & sleeves, but that is quite needless, & this I have since is no longer - The clergyman an office kind with us like the rest of us, & he came, & I thought my striped silk with high neck seen in front & low, & I was in doubt

The walking is mostly muddy when we first came, & it would be... about half the width, & you must climb or slide over, & as it is so... nature - But for our things since we - he walked upwards to London & all... small & very old, & walls I should think at least feet thick - Mrs. Bentham... filled with such quaint, old things! The fireplace in the dining room... great table in the parlor - But there were some fine old chairs, & some... imitation of the old furniture... the little old church... after the Norman invasion - I will say I loathe it - The church has been... Monday we went to call on Mrs. Bentham's house, the happy man, & that... some old... for us to take us to Whitfield & be present at the Doctors meeting... kindly proposed her maid should put my letters into the box, & so she was carried... without any mind, & quite insensible that I could dress myself, & I admit my... in travelling that I was without - Such an accident - It was the same... sort of baroque with a number of... to - And such a superb pair of... I will... parks, into the park round the house, & on the... certainly most comfortable &... with road windows in the glass... beyond which down the valley & up on the hill... stretches the park - A flower garden is not laid out, & the gravel walks &... a centre & each bed filled with some... & so set in green turf, having a charmingly pretty house - An ornamental fence of... work brick, bounds the garden opposite the house & on each side are beautiful trees &...

them a fine fence on the side next the river covered in edge of leaves.
Just coming into full flower, deep yellow, inside leaves a fine mass of
entrance in the other side of the house the door is a light
steps down in a sort of archway which leads you into an antechamber & through
at another door to the staircase, & the room leading into the library into
which we entered. It had fine carpet, & in the side between the
door & one of a looking out to Charmingfield Court surrounded with walks
of plants of tables large writing tables & little stands & book cases & tables with books
for them & stands with flowers & a few chairs & benches - there I sat till journal
for in the least noisy manner; the things we should call now simple even
plain but all is so comfortable & so agreeable - At the entrance of a very handsome
Carved marble side table, & a cheery work fine was hanging; by the side was
a fine piece of tapestry - must introduce the first & concludes with a most remarkable
woman - She is most graceful & very kind but not true me I never miss when a child
from some way & cannot stir without a fine & neat gown & a white ruffled
at her side her walk - She was very agreeable, & does everything, & believe, but
since, sides in work, & times, & with a neat deal, & was a neat deal of company; as
always well & strong, right agreeable & interesting. With a few deal of letters re-
quirements & talent - Her manner is short & abrupt, & quite settles me at first, for
she looks out her sentences at you - But when you know her you must give her
one's as entirely free from all formalities & ceremonious - Her conversation, into into
her matter were the only other such that ever I met with in the house & we were
introduced & sat with her in the afternoon - I remember some time came in & she
large splendid - looking Englishman - He was in a neat dress, as they call the bottle
short coats! I should have been out running, & soon Mrs. Kentham had arrived.
Having walked, & we sat at table, the servants having made up candles, and the
bedding well run up at 8², & their knives were set - When Mrs. Kentham had
done her business the number of the rooms, & coming to her chamber she does not
go up stairs, she called Mrs. Kentham to show me the way, & we retired to our toilettes
in a fine large room with such a romantic bedstead of a round table seat toilet-
table before the door at the end & a fine commode all the right of the room times.
They have a table with writing materials, & a breakfast table which contains a
fine "Crown" & a mounted with great care & little pieces & great with them & little
other boxes. And then a large elegant room all complete down it includes table
with work on it, for it was - Then I saw the toilet table with the round
bedstead, & a most laid ready, three laid out on the bed, & a fine piece, but
his hand I began to think it would be a nice thing so it seems & I said especially
then she came in & looked on my dress & in a little while, & some biscuits when
I came to bed & found everything ready & in a minute got settled in bed, with my
ready & supper set at one side, & everything arranged in order! And all the time
we were there Mrs. Kentham's maid came in the same way, helped dress, but my
my bonnet & a red hat of ours, &c. &c. you may be sure & put on the bed near the time.

live - she who made the soup & took the lead, was dressed in plain black with white lace at the two women in light shorts & long stockings. And the girls were all handsome people - After dinner the ladies went back to the library passing through the drawing-room or rather music-room, a smaller room than the library, adjoining, & hung round with pictures - coffee was served a table between standing the cups on a silver tray into which you put sugar & cream, & the latter following filled up from the silver coffee-pot which he carried - he drew round one of the tables, & eventually were employed in little fancy-work - At 4 we found the children when we came in - a fine looking boy of 10, dressed in England fashion, with a petticoat of red stuff falling straight in heavy folds, & little coat of the same pattern was buttoned in the throat just to show a very little of the white shirt & white collar, turned over & dark rather coarse fitting jacket - breeches with white stockings, & patent leather wrapped with sew. Thirteen maidens live - Miss Alice live, a pretty little creature with the blindest blue eyes & in a little tucked muslin shirt over the silk, & blue silk petticoat waist trimmed with ribbon, also blue legs & silk socks. There was also a little cousin from London, a little too serious in the large neck with significantly broad belt & enormous buckle to brown hair - they were nice little & unaffected children, & the little boy said he was in need with great severity & earnestness. After they were made to bed the gentlemen came in coffee was served to them, & soon after tea was served & sung, and in private talk we decided upon the time to be bed time - for the morning of the morning we did not believe to see if it were fair - When about the evening of the night, & stayed in the simple morning costume of our striped with white silk necked waist & belt neck & collar, & all caps, quite smart enough for table at home, I descended in respect of 1/2 - The dining room looked not so again quite a different view - a little lake quite embowered in trees, some fine cedars & nut trees, & distant hills in the back ground - After breakfast at hand was settled in that week's mail in the library, (already a hundred) & after enjoying them with Mr. Ray's papers put on my bonnet & coat to go out & all the green-sides &c - they lay at a little distance, quite concealed by trees & shrubbery from the house - Mr. & Mrs. Penham joined us, & as we were going through the conservatory to our dinner it began to rain - Fortunately it proved only a short shower, & satisfied itself in the day, which after that was most refreshing Mrs. Child - Mr. More weather came soon after, & we went through the fair house, & the kitchen garden & bakeries, &c. - When we returned to the house the people were arriving in the coaches - there were Lady Gordon & the Misses Gordon & Mrs. Carter Gordon - Miss Lady Cornwall & the Misses Cornwall - Mrs. & Mrs. Pitt Rivers, 1.20. Cranford & the Misses Cranford, &c. - The Christmas band was on the

Lawn opposite the front door where a heavy
lawn bordered by the trees. Here the targets
masters of ceremonies, names & list of the fair shooter & also of the gentlemen
winners, each within turn & arrows at one target, & then proceed to that target
& an account taken where they shot back to the other. Targets were placed
at a safe distance where such works, in fact - it was a very pretty sight!
Some were quite successful & shot very well, & being furnished dressed in proper
jackets & hats for the convenience of shooting it was quite picturesque -

After we had tried & looking some of us strolled away for a walk - Mr. Jones
wrote the short Nov. 1848 Gordon, & I went in an opposite direction
with Mrs. & Miss. Riffles & Mrs. & Miss. Heatham. Following the path up over
the hills through the woods there we had some fine views, we were
gone about an hour - In getting back we found them about going in to
lunch - And Mrs. Riffles warned us she would, we got no more dinner
that day - It was a very handsome collation with cold meats, puddings,
jellies, &c. and handsome cakes & fruit - And very sociable & pleasant.

The ladies who were a very well arranged dinner, & I was quite
surprised to find how easy & sociable all were - Lady Gordon & Mrs. Sanford
seemed to be quite at ease & all were very kind & pleasant - The
ladies who were in the evening, & we were not some of the time &
staid in the same way, & in time it grew cool they all came in about
5 1/2 past 8 & a tea table ^{put} round in the stair-case hall, we stood round &
took tea - And the ladies were their usual kind & sociable - The next
morning, rec'd a packet while I was in bed, the post a deal - The
next gentleman I met the next day, & the next evening we received
them having their carriage the departed, & the same night in the
evening before we had a very social evening, & I understood it was
the children "coming home to tickle me" - And that led to "ticks & tucks"
& with families, &c. &c. - Some of the next dinner, cold meat was brought
in for a little supper, & all being pretty well tired retired at 10 o'clock
time - Think it was a day without - delicious.

But having got to the end of my paper & my time I must say
Goodbye, dear Sue, pray give so much love to all from
Your ever affectionate friend